TRUTH ABOUT INDIA

THE BRITISH RAJ IN INDIA

2. ECONOMIC BASIS IN INDIA

BY

H. M. HYNDMAN

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The British Raj in India

THE invasion of India from the West, in modern times, began in earnest by way of trade and commerce. There was no preconceived intention of conquering that vast territory by any of the Europeans who first landed and made settlements on its shores, except, perhaps, for a short time by the Portuguese. Nor has there ever been a successful propaganda of Christianity in Hindustan such as menaced the well-being of China and Japan. At the beginning of the rivalry of the two principal nations of Europe for influence over the Indian courts and kingdoms, the French were the statesmen and adminstrators, the English were the merchants and traders. Such men as Dupleix and Bussy took a wider view of Indian affairs and better understood what would be to the advantage of Indians themselves

than did the English of the same period. Indians, also, were first trained to war on European principles and formed into armies of sepoys by men of the Perron and De Boigne type. Yet England succeeded in establishing her rule where France failed; because her adventurers as they gained power were supported from home, which the French were not; because the English fleets eventually obtained control of the eastern as well as the western seas; and because, at the critical moment, the present masters of Hindustan made better use of the trained Indian levies and played upon the differences between the Indian courts with greater astuteness than their opponents.

Nevertheless, the conquest of India, mainly by Indian troops led by Englishmen, was achieved, as it were, by accident. There was no organized effort whatever. The *conquistadores* of South America and Mexico were born again in a new shape, and equally destitute of scruple, throughout the settlements granted as trading centres by the *rajahs* and *nawabs* of India. The East India Company was not in the least desirous of annexing and governing

large and populous districts. On the contrary, the directors were never weary of impressing upon their representatives in India the permanent necessity of keeping their direct possessions within the narrowest possible limits. Above all, they should avoid war with their neighbours. Hostilities of any kind were injurious to business. The sole aim and objects of these advocates of profitable peace and lucrative persuasion was to secure the means for distributing enormous dividends on the shares of their Company. Aggression must be avoided, but adequate profits and commercial returns must be made. Agents on the spot took the most effective means at their disposal to satisfy the pecuniary demands of their chiefs in London and paid little attention to their prohibition of remunerative rapine. Thus was seen the marvellous spectacle of clerks and supercargoes developing into great generals and administrators of the first mark and winning an empire against fearful odds. This unexampled fashion of conducting the business of a mere trading company, taking possession of a civilised empire as a detail of business and

waging great wars in order to pay huge dividends to shareholders, thousands of miles away, is quite exceptional on such a scale in all human history. Nothing like it had ever before been seen in the East; probably nothing like it will ever occur again.

From the first began that steady withdrawal of wealth from India to England which, in one form or another, has gone on ever since. Throughout the latter part of the eighteenth century, the wealthy English *nabob*, denounced by Pitt, who had returned to his own country after shaking the pagoda-tree to some purpose in his own interest, was the familiar type of the rich man of yesterday. There are the records of the East India Company to bear witness to the conduct of the fortune-hunters of that halcyon period of plunder. India was the El Dorado of the unscrupulous and cruel commercial adventurer. The legitimate proceedings of the great Company chartered by Queen Elizabeth and successfully carried on up to our own time were bad enough. There is no doubt about that. It was no rose-water management which paid such stupendous

dividends and drove the stock of the lucky shareholders to such an enormous premium. But the illegitimate business of the East was infinitely worse in every respect. Even the lowest commercial morality cannot justify the robbery and rascality which pervaded every department of English administration in India from the time of Clive's rise to power until the first Governor-Generalship of Lord Cornwallis. The praises of many of the successful freebooters have been chanted for 150 years with national pride and exultation; the effect of their depredations upon the luckless Indians who suffered from their extortions, though denounced at the time by Englishmen of the highest character and reputation, has since been overlooked and is now almost forgotten.

It is unnecessary in any case to enlarge upon the crimes of the men who plundered in this way a great and ancient civilisation. Whether Warren Hastings could or could not have avoided the transactions stigmatized by Burke, but disregarded by the Indians themselves in consideration of his other qualities;

whether Clive and smaller men were entitled to be "amazed at their own moderation" in the the loot which they appropriated, are matters of comparatively small importance. The guilt or innocence of individuals counts for little in such a system of robbery as afflicted the provinces under immediate English control, and especially Bengal and Oudh, in the generation between 1757, the date of the Battle of Plassey, and 1786, when attempts at reform began. What the total amount of wealth may have been which was abstracted from India and transported to India without any valuable return at the end of the eighteenth century will probably never be known. It must have been quite enormous, transcending indeed the drain from America to Europe which followed upon the discoveries of Columbus and Vespucci. The wealth thus accumulated and used in the form of productive capital in English industries, especially cotton, enabled Great Britain to obtain the lead in manufacture and commerce which gave her the control of markets in the century which followed. And the Indains themselves, who provided the means for the attainment

of this commercial supremacy, suffered a second time, and even more horribly than they did from direct expropriation, by the economic consequences of their original losses.

In the seventeenth and during a great part of the eighteenth century the importation of Indian calicoes into England was prohibited on the ground that their competition would have crushed the rising home industry in similar goods. At the end of the same century, however, owing to the accumulation of riches chiefly from Hindustan, England had become possessed of a virtual monopoly of new machinery run by steam power which enabled her to undersell the whole world in textile goods of every description. English hand-loom weavers and spinners suffered seriously from the competition of the machine-made products at their own door, but their miseries were child's play in comparison with the horrors inflicted upon the weavers of India at the same time. No protective tariff was allowed to safeguard them. Unchecked competition, free trade in English goods in English territory, was a commercial religion. As a con-

sequence, these poor producers of Indian fabrics saw their means of livelihood swept away from them by a process which they could neither understand nor withstand. Tens upon tens of thousands of them perished of starvation; for there was no place for them in the English society of that day, apart from the one which they occupied. The foreign government made not the slightest attempt to regulate this fatal free-trade competition, and the effects of the English connection in this respect have been wholly harmful to the people of India. The fatal results of economic causes are carefully disregarded. Successful wars and continental annexations quite eclipse in interest the sad fate of the unfortunate Indian weavers who perished silently on the field of commercial War.

Effective steps were taken to check this objectionable form of the exploitation of India by England and to regularize the methods by which the dominant power in Hindustan remunerated itself from Indian resources for the services rendered to the subjugated territories. The improved system of

administration was set on foot in 1786 and, after having incidentally conquered the Mahrattas, the native states which rose to great prominence on the decay of the Mogul authority, the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, finally established English administration in India in much the same shape in which it exists today. Honesty was favoured, if not insured, by payment to the Europeans employed such high salaries that the temptation to accept bribes, or to indulge in illegal appropriation, became less and less inducive in proportion to the risk of removal and punishment. Whether the form of government thus created was suited to the character of the people, whether foreigners were capable of sufficiently sympathizing with the social system into which they had burglariously forced themselves, or whether the European ideas, laws and economic conceptions imposed upon the population were not likely to prove injurious; these were points which the new government never stopped to consider.

For 130 years, from 1786 to 1916, the official class of foreign administrators have done their utmost—alike in India and in Eng-

land—to convince the world that British rule has conferred immense benefit on its subjects and that the inhabitants of Hindustan are quite incapable of governing themselves. This has never been the view of the mass of Indians themselves, ignorant, peaceful and submissive as the great majority of the cultivators may be, who constitute more than four-fifths of the entire population. And there are the great "protected" Indian states, with nearly 70,000,000 of people, to prove still that administration of India is by no means the hopeless business that Englishmen as a rule believe it to be. The Montague-Chelmsford Report, unsatisfactory as Indian radicals have pronounced it, constitutes important evidence in the case, for it bears official witness to the necessity for wide-sweeping reform, as well as to the honest conviction that the Indians themselves must more largely share in and uphold a responsible government.

During the whole of the period referred to (1786-1916) conquest by force of arms and annexation by that means or by other means gone steadily forward. Some of the military

operations, always carried on in the main by native troops, exhibited great skill and courage on the part of the European leaders; though such a disaster as that of Ferozesha showed that Indian troops under Indian generals had not degenerated from the earlier days. But the most remarkable fact, brought out by those of the English administrators who were in closest touch with their subjects, was that the worst rule by their own people was preferred to the best management by foreigners. Thus, Sir William Sleeman of the old East India Company was a man so thoroughly versed in Indian languages and customs and so completely at home in Indian dress and manners that he succeeded in doing that which even the great Akbar, at the height of his power, was unable to achieve. He was able to put down that extraordinary semi-religious sect of stranglers, the Thugs, whose members had been the horror of all Indian travellers for hundreds of years. The capacity of disguise, the astounding coolness and courage displayed by Sleeman in the course of this triumph of detective enterprise and repression

of crime have never been excelled, if ever equalled. But, in addition to this marvellous performance, Sleeman was one of the ablest and best of the Company's civil servants. Naturally, too, he was loyal to British rule.

Yet what does he tell us of a specific instance with which he was familiarly acquainted? Native rule in the great province of Oudh was in every way abominable. It is doubtful whether in time of peace any worse tyranny was ever seen in any part of Hindustan. Robbery, torture, the most fiendish barbarities of every kind, were inflicted daily upon the wretched inhabitants. If ever interposition by a neighboring state under peaceful and law-abiding foreign control could appear not only justifiable but inevitable, this was such a case. Interposition and annexation, therefore, actually took place. What followed? Though all this anarchy and misgovernment were suppressed, and life and property were secure under English law and justice, the people were bitterly opposed to the change, which seemed to foreign eyes to be so much for the

better. Amid all these horrors, so shocking to Europeans of the nineteenth century, Indian habits, Indian customs, and Indian laws were in the main upheld. The land-tax was roughly and not unreasonably assessed and levied, the rapacity of native money-lenders was checked, the existing legal methods were simple and generally understood.

To give Sir William Sleeman's own words: "There were neither accumulating arrears of land revenue nor ruinous back debts to weigh down the proprietors; there were no unsatisfied decrees of Court to drive debtors to hopeless despair . . . arrears were remitted when the impossibility of payment within the year was clearly demonstrated . . . There could be no black despair in those days of changeful misrule." Never was there a more crushing exposure of the idea that honesty of administration and peace within the borders of a subject country really justified foreign domination. "The people," so this master of Indian affairs openly declared, "the people generally, or at least the greater part of them, would prefer to reside in Oudh . . . than

in our own districts, under the evils they were exposed to from the uncertainty of our laws, the multiplicity and formality of our courts, the pride and negligence of those who preside over them. . . . I am persuaded that if it were put to the vote among the people of Oudh, ninety-nine in a hundred would rather remain as they are, without any feeling of security in life or property than have our system introduced in its present complicated state."

This was in 1856. Two generations have passed since then and the system is more complicated than ever. No fewer than twenty-five thousand new laws were put on the statute-book in the first ten years of this century alone!

Annexation, therefore, to the British Empire in India has never been welcomed by the people annexed. Yet the direct government of Englishmen who did not interfere with Indian habits, but did their best to insure honest and prompt judgment in case of difference and used their authority to restrict economic hardship and to secure fair play, has often been

immensely popular. Such men are never forgotten by the inhabitants of the provinces over which they have once exercised their benign sway. Whole districts would turn out to welcome them, men, women, and children would cover them with flowers and chant their praises when they returned after the lapse of many years. This one-man rule called, of course, for thorough knowledge of the country and the language, as well as long and continuous residence among the people themselves. But such instances of individual success were not rare under the Kumpani Bahadurs. The servants of the Government who were given appointments found themselves at the early age of seventeen or eighteen thrown among a strange population and often entrusted with powers which rendered it imperative that they should become thoroughly acquainted with those over whom they were placed. It is creditable to our race that, after the early days of rapine and rascality, so many were successful under such trying circumstances.

Moreover, the East India Company itself, though it kept up a European and a powerful

Indian Army, was not lavish in its expenditures; nor, in spite of all drawbacks and the general objection to the new methods gradually gaining ground, was it regarded with hatred by its subjects. The drain of produce without return from India to England was trifling in Company days, eompared with what it afterwards became. Some of the most capable of those who rose to high appointments remembered what India had been and might be again. A few saw that European domination could be only temporary and endeavoured to prepare their countrymen for the withdrawal which they knew sooner or later was inevitable. But the general opinion both in India and England was that the Indians, split up into many races and peoples, with at least four antagonistic religions professed by millions of people, and with the caste system which shut out whole sections of inhabitants from any close contact with one another, were quite incapable of common action against the foreigners, however much they might dislike their rule. The great past of Hindustan was already being forgotten in any estimate of the future of the Empire.

Already it was taken for granted that Europeanization was the one thing needful to make of India a greater empire than ever before, and thus to increase the power and wealth of England.

Yet many hundreds of years before, the nations of India had been a collection of wealthy and highly civilised people, possessed of a great language, with an elaborate code of laws and social regulations, with exquisite artistic taste in architecture and decoration, producing beautiful manufactures of all kinds and endowed with religious ideas and philosophic and scientific conceptions which have greatly influenced the development of the most progressive races of the West. One of the noblest individual moralists who ever lived, Sakya Muni, was a Hindu; the Code of Manu of the ninth century before the Christian era is still as essential a study for the jurist as the Laws of the Twelve Tables of the Institutes of Justinian; Akbar the Mohammedan was the greatest monarch who ever ruled the East; while, even in later times, nations over whom the English held supremacy have proved

that there are among them no unworthy descendants of the authors of the Vedas, of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, of the architects of the Taj Mahal and Byapur, of Toder Mull and Nana Furnavis, of Baber, Hyder Ali and Runjeet Singh. Nevertheless, nine-tenths of what has been written about India in England is so expressed that we are led to believe that stable and civilised government in Hindustan began only with the European Raj and that nothing short of wholesale Europeanization can save Hindustan from permanent anarchy.

It is now recognised that the revolt, which goes by the name of the Indian Mutiny, was in reality a national rising against the growing extension of European domination. The native troops of the East India Company were roused against their officers by misrepresentations calculated to outrage the dearest feelings and prejudices of soldiers of all creeds and castes. But the scope of the upheaval went far beyond the army itself. A considerable part of India was directly hostile to English rule, so far as the more intelligent and well-to-do classes were concerned. The

plans of the leaders were all laid; the discontent upon which they could reckon was widespread; the recent refusal of the ancient right of adoption by the Government and seizure of the territories of Indian chieftains on that ground had alarmed all the princes; the date of the attack had been well chosen, being a hundred years after the manifest superiority of the white man in arms had been first admitted; the secret of the conspiracy was on the whole, well kept. Yet the insurrection failed. This circumstance resulted from several causes. The original mutiny at Meerut began before it was intended, and before the general outbreak which was to follow, or to occur simultaneously, was ready. The agricultural population over the greater part of India did not sympathize sufficiently with the revolt to oppose actively, or even passively, the operations of the Government troops; the vast number of camp followers required to enable an army to move under European leadership never fell short for want of recruits. The insurgents developed no really capable leader, with the exception of Tantia Topee and that

famous princess, the Ranee of Jhansi, who were not sufficiently supported. On the other hand, the English soldiers and officers exhibited wonderful vigor, courage and endurance, while individual civilian officials of the Government, who had long been in the country and were well known and trusted by the Indians under their control, kept quiet whole districts that would otherwise have joined the insurgents. But above all, the English Government owed its successful suppression of the outbreak to the fact that the Sikhs, the great people who had most recently been defeated by the foreign rulers, took sides with their conquerors and rendered invaluable assistance which ensured victory to the Europeans. The rising was, therefore, put down, and all Hindustan came under the direct or indirect control of the British Crown.

India with its 300,000,000 inhabitants has for sixty years been under the management of the most extraordinary and fortuitous system of foreign domination known to the memory of man. The rulers of these people come in succession from without, educated;

until their appointment at the age of more than twenty-one, in accordance with methods as remote from, and as irreconcilable with, Asiatic ideas as it is possible for them to be. Alike in their work and in their pleasure, they keep as far aloof as possible from the people they govern. Very rarely do they marry Indians: still more rarely do they settle permanently in the country. The head of the Government, who himself is brought out fresh from Europe and entirely ignorant of India, does not remain in office for more than five years. His subordinates return "home" frequently for their holidays and go back to England permanently, to live on a considerable pension, after their term of service is completed.

I quote an English writer who knew India well:

"Not only is there no white race in India, not only is there no white Colony, but there is no white man who proposes to remain . . . . No white man takes root in India, and the number even of sojourners is, among these masses, imperceptible."

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The longer this reign of well-meaning, but unsympathetic, carpet-baggers continues, the less intimate do their general relations with the Indian people become. The colour and race prejudices, which existed not at all, or to a very small extent, at the beginning of English dominance, now become stronger and stronger every year. In India itself men of ancient lineage, beside which the descent of the oldest European aristocracy is a mushroom growth, are considered in the presidency towns, as well as on the railways, unfit to associate on equal terms with the young white bureaucrats just arrived in the country. And these "competition-wallahs," owing their position too often to desk work, though clever enough in their own way, lack nowadays that indescribable quality of the *sahib*, or "gentleman," which is nowhere so instinctively recognized as in Asia.

And what is this alien supremacy based on? Upon fifteen hundred foreign administrators isolated among the hundreds of millions of Indians—*rari nantes in guargito vasto*—not one of whom, with the best intentions in

the world and even enjoying a far closer intimacy with his subjects than a modern civil servant claims, can exercise any lasting influence on the people committed to his charge. These are the district officers, the real rulers of India, upon whom the true responsibilities of government fall. Each is in his way a governor, and these are some of his duties: He is collector of the land revenue, registrar of the landed property in the district, judge between landlord and tenant, ministerial officer of the courts of justice, treasurer and accountant of the district, administrator of the district excise, ex-officio president of the local rates committee, referee for all questions of compensation for lands taken up for public purposes, agent for the Government in all local suits to which it is a party, referee in local public works, head of the police, ex-officio president of municipalities, and magistrate, police magistrate and criminal judge.

It is utterly impossible that all these multifarious duties, with the endless reports that have to be written and the questions with superiors which have to be discussed, can be

performed satisfactorily. Many of the ablest of the civil servants themselves admit that this is so. Constant transfers from district to district and frequent furloughs to Europe make things worse. Here again is a criticism by an English official in India when the situation was by no means so critical as it is to-day. This official himself was brought into contact with Indians much more familiarly than most of his countrymen. His family had been connected with India for more than a century and furnished two or three directors to the East India Company:

"It is, in general, sadly true that Englishmen in India live totally estranged from the people among whom they are sojourning. This estrangement is partly unavoidable, being the result of national customs, language and caste. . . . The English contempt proceeds . . . from English ignorance, and English ignorance is accomplished, as so often happens, by English bluster. Those who have known the natives well have generally liked them, even loved them, and their love has been returned with a remarkable wealth of unselfish

affection. The natives are worth the effort of knowing . . . but because . . . it does take some effort to know them, most Englishmen keep aloof. This tendency to aloofness is increasing. . . . Certain it is that the natives consider the *sahib* is not what he used to be —certain, too, that English rule is not popular. This is the great social calamity attending our Raj in India.

Over and above the Europeans immediately concerned in the administration, there are many more occupied directly or indirectly in other branches of government affairs. But in all India there are no more than 200,000 Europeans and Eurasians altogether. These are, for the most part, entirely outside the official class. The British Empire in India consists, therefore, of the bureaucrats spoken of above, and in pre-war days 75,000 English troops, of which 50,000 at the outside can be reckoned as fit for active service at any given moment. A peaceful upset of the entire English system is quite possible, seeing that, as has been truly said, the Indians themselves have only to refuse to work for Europeans and the whole

white empire would be brought to an end within a month. Certain it is that if the agricultural population, hitherto so quiescent, with the exception of a few local outbreaks, were to become even passively hostile', British rule would soon be a thing of the past.

THE ECONOMIC BASIS IN INDIA

THE agricultural population of India is the most poverty-stricken mass of human beings in the whole world. It constitutes four-fifths of all the inhabitants of Hindustan. The true test of the prosperity and good government of any country is not the average income of the whole population in which the great revenues of the millionaires, big land owners, and heads of industrial or transport combines balance the wages received by the artisans, small cultivators, or agricultural laborers, but the real well-being of the whole of the producing class. Now, this in India is steadily deteriorating, decade by decade, and year by year. Mr. William Digby's book with the misleading, ironical title, *Prosperous British India*, which I implored him not to use, was published in 1901. It contains the most terrific indictment of British rule in Hindustan that has ever been penned.

The facts and statistics contained in its 650 pages are drawn almost entirely from official reports, documents and calculations. The whole constitutes a social, economic and political investigation of surpassing interest and value. One categorical statement alone is enough to condemn our entire system:

In the year 1850, seven years before the Mutiny, the estimated income of British India was 2d. per head per day.

In the year 1882—a generation later—the officially-estimated income was 1½d. per head per day.

In the year 1900 an analysis of all sources of income gives less than ¾d. per head per day.

What the real impoverishment of the Indian *ryots* or agriculturists of British India actually must be, when the incomes of all the well-to-do population in the cities and districts of Anglo-India are deducted can scarcely be imagined by the inhabitants of the poorest European state. Mr. Digby's previously quoted 12/6d. per head per year is probably now an over-estimate. Can we wonder that a

sense of deadly dulness, depression and ruin weighs on that portion of Hindustan where Europeanization is supreme? It is not poverty alone that occasions this sad state of things. Everything tends in the same direction. Native Indian arts are disappearing, education is neglected, there is no life or pleasure available, no outlet for energy, no hope for change, no variety of occupation. An American traveller, in a recent book full of glorification of Europeans and European rule, has described the vivacity, colour and magnificence of the court of Udaipur in all its ancient splendour, side by side with ancient indifference, ancient abhorrence of the new, ancient customs and ancient devotion to a sacrosanct ruler, possessed of a pedigree directly traceable for thousands of years. And then he cannot restrain himself from comparing this un-Europeanized relic of the past, still holy to scores of millions of Hindus, with the squalid monotony and unending sadness which pervades British India.

It may be, as the majority of Englishmen and European visitors believe, that India can never emancipate herself without external aid

from her present position of subjugation. Whether it is consonant with the claims of England to be the champion of justice and freedom in other directions that she should keep what might be a great and glorious empire under her permanent and ruinous domination, is a matter which must soon be considered. It will be seen also that, of late years, a school of extremists, as well as a school of moderates, has grown up, both of which demand self-government and, in the long run, complete emancipation of India.

When these criticisms on European rule are made and evidences of continuous and increasing poverty of the ryots are adduced, the defenders of the British Government bring forward a number of facts and figures which are conclusive of prosperity to the ordinary western mind. Against the contention that so far, 150 years of European management and teaching have produced no enduring effect on the Indian mind and have introduced no permanent improvement in Indian affairs, one great argument also is used. "See," say the optimists, "how we have introduced everywhere

the blessings of peace! From the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from Burmah to Bombay, wars have ceased, internecine struggles are unknown, religious riots are at once quelled, life and property are secure as they never were before in the history of Hindustan. The Pax Britannica is more profound and affects a larger population than the Pax Romana ever did. Here all these numerous nations and peoples and religions and castes dwell together, if not in unity, at any rate with trifling differences. Hindu and Mohammedan, Sikh, Pathan and Mahratta go on from year's end to year's end with no more than local squabbles which are easily suppressed. Raids and organised robberies almost equally unknown. Justice is administered without the suspicion of bribery or the possibility of dangerous disputes out of court because of the decision reached. The militiary caste no longer exercises any influence. Peace, the greatest boon that can be vouchsafed to the hundreds of millions under the suzerainty of the Emperor-King, is secured so long as the British remain masters of the country. But only so long.

Let that superior power be once withdrawn, or even greatly shaken, and all the anarchy of the past will be revived, all the infinite passions now kept down will be re-awakened."

Such is the tone not only of Englishmen but of most Europeans who visit the country and rush by rail through the Europeanized towns and cities and garrisons and health resorts which constitute the white man's India. That the horrors of peace may in many ways be worse than the horrors of war is a consideration which never enters their minds, still less affects their judgment. All the tests of prosperity which they are accustomed to apply are fulfilled. Population is increasing rapidly: poverty is favourable to generation. Exports are rapidly increasing: what is the amount of return? Railways have been built over a large portion of the country: transport does not necessarily increase wealth. Vast irrigation works have been built: old irrigation tanks have been allowed to decay throughout huge areas and the charges for the new water are heavy, rendered still heavier by the enforced use of government water to the exclusion and

shutting down of Indian wells. These counterbalancing drawbacks are never noted. Foreign-manufactured peace is a doubtful benefit at best.

All that is great and admirable in India was created during the period when she was an independent empire with groups of fine provinces, first under local rulers, and then under the central domination of the Moguls. With all their drawbacks and hideous cruelties, they lived in the country. Though they themselves were Mohammedans, they employed Hindus of all races in the very highest posts as financiers, as administrators and as generals. Asiatics ruling Asiatics, they knew how far it was safe to go without bringing ruin upon the people and being overthrown themselves. Even in their period of decay, when debauched incompetents sat on the throne of Akbar and Aurangzib, the rule which they maladministered was native rule and the dull despair of the upright foreign despot never settled like a miasma on the country. The Mahratta *chouth* levied by the bold reavers of the Deccan and the West was hard to bear.

But impoverishing as it was in its degree and in its time, it reckoned as child's play beside the persistent transfer of wealth to a far-away country year after year; which was the inevitable consequence of costly foreign rule. Moreover, all home-bred rulers encouraged native art and native manufacture, and the best of them, such as the great Bahmuny dynasty of Byapur, developed local irrigation works to such an extent that the menace of famine in the irrigated districts became more and more remote. There were terrible famines indeed in some districts and provinces in these days prior to European invasion. But they came at long intervals and in the periods between them there was no steady, continuous reduction of the amount of food available for the people whose persistent labor provided the whole of the agricultural produce.

Peace, in fact, may be purchased too dear, and law and order, however admirable theoretically, may become a grinding economic and racial tyranny if enforced by foreigners who fail to comprehend alike the nature of the many diverse races beneath them and the best means

of raising them to a higher level of prosperity, —foreigners who never remain permanently in the land they control. Suppose a succession of capable Chinese mandarins, supported by a Chinsè army and an Italian army under Chinese officers had ruled in Italy, imposing peace, perfect peace, upon the City Republics a few hundred years ago. They would have imposed also Chinese ideas of morality and justice, industry and culture—and very high ideas they were and are—upon the countrymen of Dante and Petrarch, Borgia, Machiavelli and Leonardo da Vinci. But is it not clear that the world would have been infinitely poorer for the repression of Italian initiative and for the sombre, dead level of monotony and dependence thus brought about? Would not Italians have been justified in resorting to any means in order to relieve themselves from such a rule, however high-minded and well-intentioned its Chinese representatives in Italy might have been? Would not this have applied in like manner in England during the Wars of the Roses, to France at the time of the anarchic and bloody struggle between Catholics and

Huguenots and even to Germany when devastated by the Thirty Years' War? There can be but one honest answer to these questions, Yet India was never in a more perturbed condition, never suffered more from internal misrule or attacks from without than the different countries named at the above periods. And the rigidity and miscomprehension of Chinese domination in Europe could scarcely under any circumstances have been greater than the rigidity and miscomprehension of European despotism in Hindustan.

It was the economic pressure which perhaps first roused the more intelligent Indians to a full comprehension of the permanent injury which persistent Europeanization was inflicting upon India as a whole. And this was first appreciated and forcibly expounded, not by Indians themselves but by English merchants and administrators in the days of the East India Company, long before the Mutiny or the National Revolt of 1857 had openly manifested the discontent that existed on other grounds. Thus even at the time when the real significance of the yearly drain of

produce to England from India was far less, alike in amount and effect, than it is to day, an Englishman, Mr. Montgomery Martin, pointed out what the wholesale transfer of Indian wealth to England really meant. During the early times of unregulated appropriation, the amount paid away to the West, in one shape or another since legal methods had been introduced and enforced up to 1857, amounted to many hundreds of millions of pounds sterling, without any commercial return. That is to say, India had been depleted of her wealth to that extent for the benefit of England, as a consequence of European conquest and rule. Even the abolition of *suttee* by Lord William Bentnick, the check to female infanticide and the suppression of the Thugs made no economic amends for this ruinous impoverishment of a poor country, all the territory of which was already occupied, some of it tilled to the point of exhaustion, and some very densely populated. But this drain of produce enormously increased after the assumption of direct government by the Crown and the great extension of Europeanization in every direction.

The higher minds in the government service strongly insisted upon the great and increasing danger of this economic policy. Civil servants and military men alike enlarged upon the ruin that was being wrought. Mr. James Geddes and Mr. A. O. Hume, Major Evans Bell and Colonel Osborne, Mr. William Digby and Mr. Knight, all in their various ways did their best to represent to the government in England and in India the irretrievable mischief that was being done. So did others. The famous Parsee, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, only too fast a friend of British rule in India, devoted himself also for many years to this question. All to no purpose. At one point, 1878-79-80, the English Government at home did appreciate what was going on, and Lord Salisbury and Lord Iddesleigh, with the concurrence of Lord Cranbrook, Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Edward Stanhope and Sir Lewis Mallet, made the first steps toward the gradual restoration of Indian rule. A begining had been made most successfully in this direction in Mysore in 1868 to the permanent advantage of the population. There the remo-

val of the rigid system of taxation and the revival of the old Indian system of consideration of Indian needs at once uplifted the well-being of all the inhabitants of that territory.

But the influence of the hide-bound Indian bureaucracy and the personal interests of the middle class at home were too strong to be resisted. On the return of Mr. Gladstone's Liberal administration to power, all the preliminary reforms introduced were swept away, and from that time to this, Europeanization has become more and more the panacea for all evils, the foreign government has became even more expensive and extravagances such as the creation of new and wholly unnecessary capital cities at Delhi and Dacca encouraged waste to the extent of many millions sterling. Naturally, to keep pace with this fatal system, the land tax is more cruelly exacted than ever and the agriculturists get poorer all the time. Compare this with the statement of Mr. Chester Macnaughten in regard to the comparative results of Indian rule:

"The fact is that under existing circum-

stances, a Native State under British superiors is almost an ideal of prosperity. This remark is a general one, applying to Travancore, Mysore, etc., as well as to Baroda. While the people are governed in their own simple way, the revenue is not wasted. The peace and prosperity which characterise the rural population of India are maintained, while the corruption and dishonesty which characterise native courts are checked. The system is an inexpensive one to the states which enjoy it and contains all that is best in British and native methods. I believe it is only true to assert that there is not a single Native State in India which, if so administered, will not show a surplus." And these Indian states have little, if any, drain of payments to Europe. Even so, there is in some of these states too much meddling by the European residents with a tendency to the current bureaucratic belief in Europeanization.

But the phenomenon of the economic drain calls for closer investigation. This is especially injurious, of course, to a poor country. It may arise, to all appearance,

advantageously and without the additional drawback of foreign rule, and yet be a very serious hindrance to the country which suffers from it. On the other hand, it may constitute comparatively so small a proportion of the total wealth of the country, increased by the investment of loaned capital on which the economic drain represents the interest, that the advances can be redeemed with ease at maturity. Both the United States and Russia have been large borrowers—the former to a comparatively small amount in relation to its wealth of late; the latter has constantly required loans. But the United States was an undeveloped country, rich in virgin agricultural soil and vast mineral resources, developed by the constant exertions of a vigorous and, in the main not needy population from Europe. Railway communication afforded profitable outlet for all products and, if the lines were overloaded with indebtedness, the companies simply did not pay. As the wealth of the vast territory grew, the loans and bonds were bought back or the capital borrowed again at a lower rate of interest for new enterprises.

It is the same with municipal borrowings and state loans issued in Europe.

With Russia the case has been different. The country outside of Siberia was already settled, the people were poor and ignorant, the development, except in the oil regions, did not keep pace with the borrowing; the body of agriculturists, mostly emancipated serfs, got no richer. Therefore the unwieldy Muscovite Empire with all its wealth of undeveloped resources could not sustain the drain of produce to the West for the interest on the money that was advanced. Thus it befell that even more and more loans were needed to keep up payment of interest. Prior to the war of 1914, Russia was fully £150,000,000 behind in the payments to meet her liabilities to western creditors, mostly French. Her yearly debt on this account was not far short of £55,000,000 sterling. So, as shown in her account of exports and imports, she was nearly three years overdue in meeting her indebtedness—a deficit which had been covered by all sorts of shifts. Russian agriculture, the mainstay of that great country, had lost

instead of gained strength, as was clearly shown by Professor Miliukoff. The difference between the United States and Russia is obvious. In one case, the imported capital had enhanced and quickened production far beyond the amount needed to pay the yearly interest: in the other case, the interest represented for the most part a deduction from production, which had been little increased, if not diminished, in agriculture and not sufficiently expanded in manufacture and mining. Hence, the drain of Russian produce has been ruinous and the inevitable outcome is bankruptcy and repudiation.

But the real economic condition of India is far worse than this. Putting aside the profits on tea-planting, gold-mining and other enterprises established and financed by English capitalists, which cannot be fairly regarded as withdrawals from actual Indian wealth, seeing that these ventures are purely European, the total amount of the payments made in produce from India to England without any commercial return is not less than £30,000,000 every year. This is an understatement

of the truth. Moreover, the drain does not apply to the so-called Native States—that is to say, to states under British protection but not under direct British rule. These great provinces not only are relatively wealthy, in comparison with the rest of poverty-stricken Hindustan, so far as their agricultural population is concerned, but also they have practically no remittances to make to England on civil and military account and little for interest on railways. Their trade, therefore, is relatively greater per head of population. But, as the English trade returns are made out, it is practically impossible for any outside investigator or critic to discriminate correctly between the commercial dealings of British territory proper and those of these great Native States which contain considerably more than one-fifth of the entire inhabitants of Hindustan. The drain of produce, therefore, is derived not from the 315,000,000 of people in India, but from 245,000,000: the 70,000,000 in the protected territories should be deducted.* And the trade of these 70,000,000 constitutes in reality much

*Census of 1911.

more than one-fifth of the total trade. This is a very important fact in considering the economic effect of European rule in Asia and it is not generally recognized. For, in the calculations which follow, it must always be borne in mind that certainly not less than one-fourth of the trade imports and a very much greater proportion of the treasure imports go into the countries which are not under direct British rule—the great Native States with 70,000,000 inhabitants.

Under pre-war conditions, the total amount of exports by sea of private merchandise of Indian products from British India and the Native States together, for the five years, 1909-10 to 1913-14, was £ 731,657,602, or an average of £146,331,520 a year. The total amount of imports by sea of private merchandise during the same period of five years was £ 486,157,310. Here is a difference of not less than £245,000,000 between the exports and the imports of private merchandise, or a yearly disparity of £ 49,000,000 without return in the form of merchandise, although the imports for 1912-13 and 1913-14

reached the exceptional figures of £107,000,000 and £122,000,000 respectively. Against this extraordinary discrepancy, the almost equally remarkable import of treasure, ranging from £25,000,000 to as high as £41,000,000 in the years under consideration, is naturally put forward by official apologists for India's desperate poverty. But the Government of India has always refused to make any distinction between the exports and imports of the Native States and those of British India. I am quite confident that at least half of the imported treasure, as well as a great deal more than their proportional part of the imports of merchandise, goes into these Native States. The yearly drain from British India of commercial produce, of which there is no commercial return, I put at upward of £30,000,000 a year.

If India with its vast population were even a moderately rich country, this drain of produce to a foreign power, going on year after year, and increasing rather than diminishing, would be a matter of concern, especially as it has proceeded now for just 150 years. But when the amount thus calculated is extort-

ed from the poorest population on the planet, then it is clear that the name which I gave to this process nearly forty years ago, "Bleeding to death," represents what is being done.

Lord Curzon estimated the average income of the Indians at not more than £2 a year. Mr. William Digby put the average value of the production of the cultivators at not more than 12s. 6d. a year per head. It is inconceivable to us that human beings can exist upon such a miserable pittance. Yet, out of this despicable return for constant work upon the soil, the Government Land tax which produces the Land Revenue, deducts no less a sum than £21,000,000 a year. Moreover, the British Government insists upon this tax being paid by the cultivators before the crops are grown, and paid in silver calculated at a factitious rate. This means that, while the actual value of a rupee on the markets of the world may not be more than 11d. or 1sh., the Hindu *ryot* is compelled to pay this Government Land Tax in rupees at the rate of $\frac{1}{4}$d., or above 30 per cent. more than the rupee is worth—this, I repeat, before the crops are

grown and reaped! What is the result of this? Inevitably that the cultivators are forced to in the hands of the native money-lenders at rates varying from 15 to 60 per cent. And then official apologists for the Government hold up their hands in horror at the exactions of the usurious money-lenders. The result is that the position of Indian cultivators and their families is becoming more and more hopeless.

It is preposterous to argue that irrigation is remedying this state of things. Nothing of the sort. Irrigation applies to a very small area as carried out under European engineers. Sometimes the quality of the water supplied has proved actually injurious, owing to miscalculation as to the nature of the silt it would carry with it. In other cases, the charges have been in excess of the value of the water to the cultivators, who were compelled to take it and to close down their own wells in order to do so. If the soil is constantly being exhausted by over-cropping, irrigation by itself does no good. It was not an Indian, but an Englishman, Mr. Thorburn holding a high official post in Bengal, who

said: "We are driving a Juggernaut car of western progress over the fortunes of the people of India." The word "progress" is evidently used there in an ironical sense. Mr. Donald Smeaton too declared that England was working up India to a revolt besides which "the Mutiny would be child's play." That is my own conviction.

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